

REMARKS

Claims 31, 33-35, and 47-49 are pending in the application. Claims 13-21, and 46 were canceled in the last Amendment, submitted November 8, 2006. Claims 1-12, 22-30, 37, and 38 had been previously canceled. Claims 32, 36, 39-45 had also been canceled previously. Claims 31 and 47 are the only independent claims.

Claims Rejections - Double Patenting

Claims 31, 33-35, and 47-49 stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims of U.S. Patent Application No. 10/663,084. The Examiner contends that the '084 application contains method claims that repeats in some form the subject matter of pending claims 31, 33-35, and 47-49.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 31, 33-35, and 47-49 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness type double patenting.

The present application contains only method claims. The '084 application contains only apparatus claims. The '084 application is a divisional of the instant application and was filed in response to a Restriction Requirement in this case.

In a transmittal form filed with the '084 application, applicants canceled claims 13-21, 31-36 and 39-45 of the parent application. (There were only 42 claims, claim 42 being erroneously numbered as claim 40.) Claims 13-21, 31-36 and 39-45 were all of the method claims in the parent application (the instant case). The remaining claims were all apparatus claims, pursuant to the Restriction Requirement that had been issued in the present application.

Accordingly, there is no basis for the present double patenting rejection.

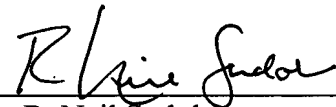
Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn and the application passed to issue.

Applicants note again that the issue fee was already paid in this case. Perhaps the application can be forwarded immediately to the issue branch for expeditious processing towards issuance.

Should the Examiner believe that direct contact with applicant's attorney would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,

COLEMAN SUDOL SAPONE, P.C.

By: 
R. Neil Sudol
Reg. No. 31,669

714 Colorado Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 066-05-1601
(203) 366-3560

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